

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SAA-01 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, LE, UN, MARR
SUBJECT: PRESS TREATMENT OF LEONARD VISIT.

1. BEIRUT MEDIA HAVE STARTED LINKING LEONARD VISIT WITH PROCESS OF SPEEDING UP OF DEPLOYMENT OF LEBANESE ARMY UNITS IN SOUTH LEBANON. MOST PAPERS PLAYED UP FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT "IT OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT LEBANESE ARMY BE DEPLOYED IN SOUTH ASAP." FOLLOWING LEONARD MEETING WITH SARKIS, ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IKE, STRESSED: "SOURCE CLOSE TO LEBANESE GOVERNMENT SAID THERE IS STRONG POSSIBILITY LEBANESE ARMY WILL BE DEPLOYED IN SOUTH BEFORE NEXT WEDNESDAY."

2. LEFTIST AS-SAFIR TUESDAY SAID THAT POLITICAL CIRCLES "HAVE WITNESSED RECENTLY SERIES OF OFFICIAL AMERICAN STANDS WHICH TALK OPENLY OF NECESSITY OF MAKING DECISION REGARDING DEPLOYMENT OF ARMY IN SOUTH. OBSERVERS UNDERSTOOD FROM AMERICAN CRITICISM OF LEBANESE FRONTS' ZIONIST CONNECTION THAT U.S. DOES NOT INSIST ON KEEPING MAJORS HADDAD AND SHIDYAK WITHIN LEBANESE ARMY. SAME CIRCLES ADDED THAT AMERICANS NO LONGER

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CONSIDER ISSUE OF TWO OFFICERS CASE WORTHY OF FURTHER CONSIDERATION, AND EVEN NEWS FROM ISRAEL INDICATES THAT TWO OFFICERS HAVE LOST SOME OF ENTHUSIASM THEY USED TO ENJOY IN ISRAEL."

3. ON OTHER HAND, TODAY'S AS-SAFIR ESTABLISHES LINK BETWEEN SENDING ARMY TO SOUTH AND "AMERICAN

PROMISE" TO PRESS ISRAEL NOT TO OBSTRUCT OPERATION:
"EMERGING FROM MEETING HELD YESTERDAY AT DEFENSE
MINISTRY, BOUTROS EXPRESSED OPTIMISM ABOUT ARMY
DEPLOYMENT. WELL-INFORMED POLITICAL SOURCES SAID
BOUTROS' OPTIMISM IS BASED ON AMERICAN PROMISE TO PRESS
ISRAEL NOT TO EXPLOIT LOYALTY OF HADDAD AND SHIDYAK TO
TEL AVIV AND PREVENT ENTRY OF LEBANESE ARMY. IN
LIGHT OF AMERICAN PROMISE, POLITICAL DECISION TO SEND
ARMY TO SOUTH WAS CONVEYED TO ARMY COMMAND IN ORDER
TO TAKE NECESSARY MEASURES. THIS QUESTION WAS ALSO
DISCUSSED DURING MEETINGS HELD BETWEEN SARKIS/HOSS/
BOUTROS AND LEONARD."

4. HIGHLIGHTING SAME THEME, RIGHT WING AL-BAYRAQ
REPORTED THAT "A MAJOR REASON OR HASTENING OF SENDING
ARMY TO SOUTH IS WHAT LEONARD CARRIED WITH HIM AND
REVIEWED WITH LEBANESE OFFICIALS. PROMINENT POLITICAL
SOURCE REVEALED AMERICAN ENVOY HAD INFORMED SENIOR
OFFICIALS THAT IT IS NO LONGER PERMISSIBLE TO DELAY
SENDING ARMY FOR FEAR THAT SUCH DELAY COULD CAUSE
SERIOUS PROBLEM THAT CANNOT BE CONTAINED."

5. INDEPENDENT AN-NAHAR DEALT WITH QUESTION OF
SENDING ARMY FROM ANGLE OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE
TO REBUILD LEBANESE ARMY: "WELL-INFORMED SOURCES HIGH-
LIGHTED U.S. INTEREST IN REBUILDING LEBANESE ARMY AND
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POINTED OUT THAT AN AMERICAN TEAM OF 14 SENIOR OFFICERS
HAD VISITED BEIRUT MORE THAN TWO WEEKS AGO AND DISCUSSED
WITH LEBANESE ARMY OFFICIALS OBSTACLES AND DIFFICULTIES
FACING PROCESS OF REBUILDING ARMY. TEAM EXPRESSED
USG READINESS TO HELP LEBANON REBUILD ARMY OF WHOLE
LEBANON."

DECON 8/26/78.
PARKER

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